

**From:** Connolly, Robert L.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2005 5:20 PM  
**To:** restructure.sizestandards@sba.gov  
**Subject:** FW: SBIR

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Fred Joerger [mailto:joerger@joergerinc.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2005 3:57 PM  
**To:** technology@sba.gov  
**Subject:** SBIR

February 16, 2005

## COMMENTS ON THE SBIR PROGRAM

The following are some comments on the SRIR program and its progress.

The United States has always been a powerful force in designing and producing the latest devices and this has helped keep our country in the forefront. The SBIR was to help people evaluate and if feasible develop their new ideas. It provided the money, often a problem for small companies and if required, technical help in developing these ideas. Unfortunately I do not believe this is what has happened.

Joerger Enterprises, Inc. designs, manufactures and sells a line of sophisticated electronic modules primarily used by government research laboratories and universities involved in research. Our customers are Los Alamos, Livermore, Argonne, Fermi and others. We sell worldwide. The main problems I see with the SBIR program is it is being used by a number of companies as a means of "government retirement" and the level of applications is too stringent. We have had a number of phase 1 awards and one phase 2 award. The products that were designed not with the SBIR effort but the knowledge learned while doing the SBIR where significant. The products were well accepted and were purchased by our users. I am also aware that a number of companies receive a great deal of grants but produce no useful products.

Many of our competitors are from other countries. In fact all the large companies that we competed with that where from the USA have given up their product lines. Now most of the new products come from abroad. And it is interesting to note that most of these new products are designed by laboratories and manufactured and sold by our competitors. The companies here have found it is difficult and expensive to develop new products in a market where the IC availability improves rapidly and product life is short. Their answer has been to close.

It is sad to say but we are not producing the number of new engineers needed to produce new equipment. I am aware that we have a great deal of college graduates but the skills they learn in college is no longer enough. Our educational system is poor and other countries are surpassing us. It is difficult for me to believe that the only thing a college student learns is were he would like to get his masters. It seems the brightest graduates are foreign and they go back home after their education here is over. Americans need a better education but first they have to understand they are not getting it. It seems as if they attend classes that will make them intelligent. It will not. They must learn that to accomplish anything in this world effort must be provided and this is not being done. Parents and teachers must learn this and enforce it. It appears schools are too easy and all parents want is that their children receive good grades whether they deserve them or not.

Our country is headed for a downfall if the educational system stays the same. Hopefully this can be fixed but the problems have to be brought to light and understood by the students, teachers and parents.

There are a great many bright people in this country and it would be nice if the SBIR program could help them. It seems that to get a grant requires a topic that is quite dynamic. I think it should also cover good ideas that if developed could produce good results. This does not mean every idea is worth while, far from it. It must be a good idea for something that is not now available and if it could be accomplished would benefit our country. The grants also cover mainly research, but in reality a strong country needs many things to be available. If the government wants to help people develop ideas they should apply to our whole country. Research is important and what we are primarily interested in but manufacturing in general helps our country greatly.

It would be nice if the SBIR program offered help to small businesses that had a good idea that could improve our country. I also think that anyone who receives a grant should be graded. I believe that if you receive more than 15 you are to indicate this. It seems that is a large number of grants and if all that was accomplished was that the company spent the money and did not produce anything it should be noted. Our country could use some help and if the government wants to offer it then it should insure that the company's efforts deserved the award.

Our country became powerful by their citizens. Developing new products is useful but expensive. It would be nice if the government helped, the ideas suggested made practical sense, results should be graded, and the amount of paperwork was made minimal.

It sounds simple but it is not. The company should be small; the idea good, the results judged and used in future awards to that company. An effort should be made by the company in applying for the grant so that the government understands what they are proposing, the government should decide if it is worthwhile, if yes award the grant then at the end decide if the

money was well spent.

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